

power and essential supervision, which the public interest very obviously demands. The entire management of the public money is, in effect, committed to a single individual, without control or sufficient check; and admitting the integrity of that individual to be above reproach, which the committee are ready to admit, and that his intelligence is of the first order; they cannot consent at the same time, that it consists with a due regard to the financial relations of the state to permit the continuance of a system so very imperfect and defective. In the view of this committee the proper duties of a treasurer are to receive, disburse, and account for the revenues; and a faithful discharge of those duties is sufficient to employ the diligent attention of an able officer, from day to day, throughout the year. But for the beneficial administration of the treasury department, the public welfare demands more than a faithful discharge of these duties. It demands, in fact, the constant vigilance of a competent statesman to superintend the collection, to avoid evasions, and to secure a similarity of construction, and unity of action, in every fiscal regulation.

The committee have reason to believe that many of the revenue laws are either dormant and inoperative, or that they are very partially, and consequently very unjustly, executed; and they have understood that immense losses have accrued from numerous delinquents escaping through the inadequacy of the laws, or through indiscreet indulgencies, and the insufficiency, in point of form, of official bonds; and that the inequality of contributions, and the great injustice which arise from these defects, might be avoided by a modification which would not only provide the necessary checks and salutary control, in the receipt and expenditure, but protect the treasury from many frauds and wasteful evasions of the revenue laws; they therefore respectfully recommend the appointment of an officer, under the title of Comptroller of the Treasury, whose duty it shall be to have in charge, and be responsible for, the administration of these concerns.

The expediency and political justice of a general valuation of all estates, to include the mass of productive property which hitherto has escaped taxation, as an equitable basis of contribution, has presented itself to the consideration of the committee; and after the best reflection which they have been able to devote to this branch of the subject matter referred to them, they have concluded, that according to the true understanding of the charter of our rights, every able adult person within the state is presumed to possess some estate, and ought to pay in due proportion for its support; and that actual paupers only are excepted from the operation of this rule. And this principle being assumed, the committee proceeded to mature a system of valuation, which they conceive will correspond with the equal rights of every interest, and harmonize with the intent and meaning of the constitution.

The committee would also suggest, and beg leave to recom-